

Approved on 05.08.2012

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee(WUDAC)

April 10, 2012 Meeting Minutes
2424 Reddie Drive, Wheaton MD 20902

Members Present: Jeannette Feldner (Chair), Marian Fryer, William Moore, Janet Yu, Jim Onder, Linda Amendt, Devala Janardan, Henriot St. Gerard, Matt Barry, Ken Nelson

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Ana Lopez van Balen, Director, Mid-County Regional Center
Sidney Cooper, Marketing and Communications Director
Peter McGinnity, Wheaton Redevelopment Manager

Guests: Hans Riemer, Montgomery County Council member
Sgt. Currie, 4th District CBD,
Esther French, Wheaton Patch
Erich Brann, Costco
Pat Harris, Lerch Early

Call to Order: Chair Jeannette Feldner, 5:05pm

Motions: Minutes approved with corrections

Police Report:

Sgt. Currie reported on 3 robberies, two at the Metro Station and one on Blueridge Ave. near the 7-11, with clothing and phones taken. There were two aggravated assaults on Grandview, domestic situations with arrests made, and 6 auto related thefts. He reported police are paying special attention to the clubs to control alcohol and other crimes.

Costco Presentation:

Erich Brann and Pat Harris presented a revised plan for the Costco gas station that they felt addressed community concerns. Some highlights of their plan included: double-walled pipes and tanks with auto cutoff leak detectors, a varied height “green” sound wall to shield noise from surrounding homes, photo controlled lighting, and a county approved storm water management plan. They feel the community has been misguided about project and they announced an open house at the Crossways Center on April 25th for community comment. WUDAC decided to further discuss this issue at its May meeting in order to allow members time to gauge community sentiment.

Report from Councilmember Hans Riemer:

Noted that Council had voted unanimously earlier that day to support a staff backed \$66 million plan to begin Wheaton redevelopment with a county building and Town Square on Lot 13. He stated he is sympathetic with the work community groups have done and believes this is the

threshold of county investment in Wheaton. He believed this plan would result in more rapid delivery of valuable investment to downtown Wheaton. He agreed that this alone would not revitalize Wheaton. He recommended quarterly meetings with community groups, audits to survey sidewalks for “walkability”, free WIFI from the cable fund, a task force to study safety perceptions and a review to implement bike sharing and rapid transit initiatives.

Mr. Riemer then took questions and comments from the WUDAC members. WUDAC members each shared their sentiments regarding the process that lead to the council decision. Comments revolved around the following:

- Redevelopment needing to go beyond the construction of a building and town square;
- Not taking advantage of the private investment by B.F. Saul;
- Indifference to years of community “excitement” and the sense of building something together;
- The disconnect between the changes in Wheaton since the 2009 study used to formulate the Council-backed plan;
- Overall disappointment with the Council;
- Some optimism with the plan in that now the money is finally committed to Wheaton;
- Staying involved in order to have voices heard in what is to come.

RSC Director Report: A bigger better Farmers Market on the town green across from the Mid-County Regional Services Center will premiere on May 6th. The existing Farmers Market will join forces with one currently located in Briggs Chaney to bring an expanded selection to our area.

Subcommittee Reports: Communications committee handed out a draft for WUDAC members to review for the May meeting. Sidney Cooper reminded all that Taste of Wheaton is May 20th. Due to time constraints all other committees submitted written reports.

Westfield Report: Matt reported that Mall sales were up 8%. Sales of food and shoes are hot while sales of fashion and jewelry are not. Monster Auto Group has leased the space formerly occupied by Ourisman. G by Guess and FYE are under construction. Macy’s will be having a VIP shop day. Details to be announced

Redevelopment Report: For the sake of time, Peter McGinnity submitted a written report for the record.

Other Business:

Jeannette stated that the terms of two members were up and other members whose 1st term is expiring need to let her know if they will reapply. Also, the Committee Review Board’s report to the Montgomery County Council is due by May 6th.

Community Concerns: None reported

Meeting Adjourned: 6:35pm

